

254. 375 (1924)). It was therefore interesting to find it growing on tidal mud in the Carman River near South Haven (*Svenson* no. 6397). —H. K. SVENSON, Brooklyn Botanic Garden.

NOTES ON THE NORTHERN RANGE OF ZIZANIA IN
MANITOBA

A. I. HALLOWELL

IN the course of an ethnological study of the Saulteaux Indians of the Berens River, conducted during the past three summers, the writer has collected a considerable amount of ethno-botanical data. The river mentioned rises in Ontario, flows northwestward and empties into Lake Winnipeg at approximately 52° 20' N. Lat. The band of Indians farthest up the river inhabits the neighborhood of Lake Pekangikum (Ont.) some 260 miles from the mouth. A second band, the Grand Rapids group, occupies the district midway between the Pekangikum band and the Berens River band proper, located at the mouth of the river.

Among the other items *Zizania aquatica* L., although not as important today as formerly, is a food plant well known to all of these Indians. This use of *Zizania*, paralleled by many American natives elsewhere, would scarcely be worth recording in a botanical journal were it not for the fact that data obtained on the precise localities where the plant flourishes in abundance, seems to indicate that it grows somewhat farther north than has hitherto been reported in this area. Many years ago, for example, when Prof. A. E. Jenks published his "Wild-Rice Gatherers of the Upper Lakes"¹ he included data obtained from botanists and the botanical literature on the geographical range of *Zizania*. He stated its northern limits to be approximately 50°.² Even in the "Check List of Manitoba Flora" issued by the Botany Department of Manitoba Agricultural College, 1922, the only locality specified for *Zizania* is Sturgeon Creek, in the southern part of the Province. Yet until recently the native Indians of various localities east of Lake Winnipeg and almost as far north as 53° have been annually harvesting the plant and utilizing it as one of their staple foods for many years.

My personal interest in the range of *Zizania* grew out of the ques-

¹ Bureau of American Ethnology, 19th Annual Report, 1900.

² Op. cit. Part 2, p. 1028.

tion which arose in my mind as to whether the Indians made use of it throughout its limits. Consultation with Dr. J. M. Fogg, Jr. and correspondence with Dr. Hugh M. Raup made it seem worthwhile to record the information I had secured from the Indians, despite the fact that I have not myself observed *Zizania* in all of the localities mentioned below. My principal informant, I might add, was Chief Williams Berens, of the Berens River Band, an exceptionally intelligent Indian, who has travelled widely throughout the country east of Lake Winnipeg, especially between 52° and 54° N. Latitude. According to his observations, *Zizania* does not range as far north as the last mentioned degree, the latitude of Norway House. I visited this locality in 1930 and can testify that the Cree Indians of this district make no use of *Zizania*, a fact which in itself has no botanical value, although it is consistent with Chief Berens' statement. The latter also asserted that no wild rice grows on the canoe route between Norway House and Island Lake to the east, a distance of some 175 miles, at approximately the same latitude. This negative observation is also supported by my own inquiries at Island Lake in 1930, which disclosed no utilization of the grain there by the Saulteau-speaking natives.

Turning now to positive information as to the occurrence of *Zizania*, the following localities are those in which the plant grows in sufficient abundance to have made it worthwhile for the Indians to harvest the grain. Formerly, several of these were visited exclusively for this purpose, although not to-day. In a forthcoming publication I shall indicate these localities on a map. For the purposes of this note, approximate references to degrees of latitude and longitude will have to suffice.

1. In a number of small lakes and creeks on Chief Berens' hunting ground, none of which are named on official maps (Lat. 52° 35', Long. 96° 30') *Zizania* grows in abundance. In 1933, he said, there was sufficient wild rice to feed "three or four battalions of men."

2. A lake which, in the native tongue, is known as the "wild-rice gathering place." (Lat. 52° 35', Long. 96°) is another well-known locality. The Indians of the Poplar River band (north of Berens River) used to frequent this lake for the purpose of harvesting *Zizania* as did members of the Little Grand Rapids band of the Berens River.

3. On the Berens River itself wild rice is fairly abundant from the mouth of the river as far inland as Long Lake (Lat. 52° 10', Long. 96° 5'), a distance of some 60 miles. Long Lake is likewise the approxi-

mate boundary between the hunting grounds of the Berens River band proper and the Little Grand Rapids Indians.

4. In approximately the same general locality the Etomami River enters the Berens River at Etomami Falls.¹ Above the falls and along the river as far as a fairly large lake *Zizania* grows in abundance. Some of the Grand Rapidsers used to gather their wild rice here, since farther up the river it is said to be absent. When I visited Lake Pekangikum in 1932, I found that these Indians did not utilize *Zizania* at all, although they knew its nutritive properties. I was told that it did not grow in sufficient quantities anywhere within their habitat to enable them to exploit it economically. This negative economic fact is reflected by the absence, in their calendrical terminology, of a "wild rice gathering moon" which is to be found in the terminology of the other two bands, as well as among wild rice gatherers of the Great Lakes.

Native place-names, sometimes continued in English translation, are likewise legitimate clues to the occurrence of *Zizania*, because a Wild Rice River or Lake would not be so named by the Indians unless it had reference to the presence, and probably economic exploitation, of the plant in such a locality. I wish, therefore, to call attention to the following localities south of the Berens River which Chief Berens believed to be those exploited by the Indians of the Blood Vein and Hollow Water River bands.

5. Rice River, a small stream which enters Lake Winnipeg from the east at 51° 15' N. Latitude.

6. Rice Lake (51° Lat., 95° 31' Long.)

It would appear from this brief survey that, like their Ojibwa congeners to the southeast, the Saulteaux Indians east of Lake Winnipeg utilized *Zizania* whenever it occurred within their habitat and even made considerable journeys at times to harvest the grain in neighboring localities. While not enlarging the range of *Zizania* in any precise botanical detail the data presented unequivocally indicate that its limits exceed 50° N. Lat. in Manitoba and that there is legitimate doubt whether the plant occurs in any abundance, if at all, beyond 53°.

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY,
University of Pennsylvania.

¹ Not to be confused with the junction of the same river and the Berens River much nearer the mouth.